

UNCLASSIFIED

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Document Number: 1978BUENOS03211

Page: 1

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 03211 262032Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 /073 W

R 262009Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5503

[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 3211

E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS SHUM, AR
SUBJECT DETENTION OF ARGENTINE JEHOVAHS WITNESSES

REF: BUENOS AIRES 1164

1. POLICE HARASSMENT AND ARRESTS OF JEHOVAHS WITNESSES
HAVE INCREASED RECENTLY. ACCORDING TO CHARLES EISENHOWER,
LONG TIME RESIDENT AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
JEHOVAHS WITNESSES HERE, 98 WITNESSES HAVE BEEN
ARRESTED IN 12 SEPARATE OPERATIONS SINCE MARCH 18TH.

2. IN MOST CASES THE WITNESSES HAVE BEEN RELEASED WITHIN
24 HOURS. HOWEVER, TEN WITNESSES ARRESTED IN PUERTO RICO,
MISSIONES PROVINCE ON APRIL 10TH AND 7 WITNESSES
ARRESTED IN MENDOZA LAST WEEK CONTINUED TO BE DETAINED.
ACCORDING TO EISENHOWER SOME OF THE PRISONERS WERE BADLY
TREATED AND DENIED OF FOOD AND BEDDING.

3. CAUSE OF THE ARRESTS WAS APPARENTLY THE WITNESSES
TECHNICAL VIOLATION OF A GOVERNMENT DECREE OF AUGUST
31, 1976 FORBIDDING THEM TO ASSEMBLE, PUBLISH AND/OR
PROSELYTIZE.

PAGE 02 BUENOS 03211 262032Z

4. WITH REGARD TO THEIR LEGAL STATUS, WITNESSES ARE PREPARING TO
ASK FOR OFFICIAL RECOGNITION AS RECENT DECREE
REQUIRING NON-CATHOLIC RELIGIONS TO REGISTER WITH THE

Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 1

UNCLASSIFIED

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Page: 2

Channel: n/a

GOVERNMENT. DELAY BY THE GOVERNMENT IN DECIDING ON PROCEDURES FOR
THIS REGISTRATION HAS HELD THE MATTER BACK.
CASTRO

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Current Class: [REDACTED]

Page: 2

UNCLASSIFIED